

ANNEX K: EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES

1.0 PURPOSE

This annex details the duties and responsibilities of the various response organizations and agencies. A brief discussion of the resources each has the capability to employ is included. The attached appendices detail communication and funding procedures to be used during a response.

2.0 EPA RESOURCES

2.1 EPA REGION 6

2.1.1 Prevention and Response Branch

Region 6 has a dedicated Emergency Response Center and Mobile Command Post. The Center contains all video, computer and telephonic equipment needed to assist EPA with response coordination. The Region has a motor home that serves as a mobile command post.

The command post has been updated several times and contains the latest in communications gear (cell and satellite phones, cell fax modem, fax machines, digital TV dish, TV, VCR, Pentium Computers, vhf-fm repeater radio, etc.), office space and a small meeting room. Vehicles are dedicated to the Prevention and Response Branch for the purpose of emergency response and removal activities.

The Region has an open contract for helicopter leasing for response. In-house capability to respond to incidents requiring level A, B, C, and D protection is also available within the Region.

2.1.2 Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The USEPA Region 6 ERT is comprised of a dedicated pool of OSCs. OSCs in the Prevention and Response Branch will serve as part of the dedicated pool. The actual rotation lasts for one week. These assignments are 24 hours/day.

All National Response Center notifications and calls to the Region 6 spill line are answered and reviewed by the telephone duty OSC (or a relief OSC during duty hours).

2.1.3 Regional Response Center

USEPA has made available to the OSC a conferencing area, electronic technical support, and various state of the art equipment necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities during a response. This facility is located within the USEPA Region 6 PRB office space. The response center is manned daily with the exception of after work hours and weekends by an OSC.

2.1.4 Regional Incident Coordination Team (RICT)

During a significant regional incident involving an oil discharge or hazardous material release the RICT is available to the OSC and may provide assistance in response activities. The incident can be in response to a major oil or hazardous material event or any disaster or emergency situation caused by nature, technological event, or other incidents requiring Federal assistance.

Activation of the RICT can be made by any member. Responsibilities of the RICT include, but are not limited to:

- Support to the EPA On-Scene Coordinator(s) in managing response personnel and resources.
- Support to OSC=s in terms of resources (personnel and equipment), expertise, and assistance.
- Advice on and resolution of any permit issues and disputes.
- Assistance with media or congressional inquiries, press conferences, and public meetings.
- Contracting and financial assistance.
- Prompt resolution of legal issues and site access problems.
- Providing monitoring, sampling, or analytical assistance when needed.

- Briefing and informing the Regional Administrator, the Regional Staff, EPA Headquarters and their respective division management on continuing and on-going activities associated with the response.

2.1.5 Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) Contractor

As a contractor to the USEPA, the START provides personnel, materials and equipment to augment response activities. In a spill situation, START personnel are under the direction of and provide support to the OSC. Specific science and technical related activities include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting samples
- Providing analysis of samples at a USEPA contract lab or a non-contract lab, if necessary
- Providing data to identify the existence and extent of a release, the source and nature of the release and the extent of danger to the public
- Identifying personal safety requirements
- Monitoring cleanup personnel
- Evaluating disposal options
- Assisting in the assessment of the feasibility and effectiveness of containment, on-site treatment and removal options
- Performing surveillance activities
- Providing a member scientific support team

2.1.6 ERRS Contractor

The Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractor provides response services for emergency, time critical and non-time critical removal actions and early/interim remedial actions involving the releases of hazardous substances, oil and other contaminants or pollutants at the direction of the OSC.

ERRS provides equipment, personnel and other necessary items to serve in a support role rather than an advisory role, although they can provide input to assist the OSC in making decisions.

2.2 EPA HEADQUARTERS

2.2.1 EPA Environmental Response Team (EPA ERT)

The U.S. EPA Environmental Response Team (ERT) provides access to special response equipment, including decontamination, sampling, and air monitoring equipment. The ERT can provide advice to the OSC in hazard evaluation, safety, cleanup techniques and priorities, dispersant application, and training.

The ERT has expertise in treatment technology, biology, chemistry, hydrology, geology, and engineering, and can provide access to decontamination equipment for chemical releases. It can also advise the OSC in the following areas:

- Hazard evaluation and risk assessment
- Multimedia sampling and analysis
- Water supply decontamination and protection
- Degree of cleanup required

2.2.2 RESPONSE ENGINEERING ANALYTICAL CONTRACT (REAC) Contractor

The Response Engineering Analytical Contract (REAC) contractors services are contracted directly to the USEPA Environmental Response Team (EPA-ERT).

Their capabilities are very similar to that of the USEPA Region 6 START contractor and in addition have specialized equipment needed for assessment activities. Although located outside the Region 6 area, the REAC Contractor is available for response support to the OSC, through the EPA-ERT.

2.2.3 Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT)

Radiological Emergency Response Teams (RERTs) have been established by U.S. EPA Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) to provide response and support for incidents or sites containing radiological

hazards. Expertise is available in radiation monitoring, radionuclide analysis, radiation health physics, and risk assessment. RERTs can provide on-site support, including mobile monitoring laboratories for radiochemical sampling and analysis.

Requests for support may be made 24 hours a day via the National Response Center or directly to the Regional U.S. EPA Radiation Program Manager in the Air and Radiation Division. Assistance is also available from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, DOE, and other Federal agencies.

3.0 US COAST GUARD RESOURCES

The USCG has the capabilities to respond to discharges and releases in the coastal zone, and when requested to by EPA or through pre-existing agreement in the in-land zone. Region 6 has one Coast Guard District.

Eighth: The Eight District boundaries include Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky, with its district office located in New Orleans, Louisiana.

3.1 DISTRICT RESPONSE GROUP/DISTRICT RESPONSE ADVISORY TEAM

3.1.1 District Response Group (DRG)

The DRG assets are comprised of personnel, small boats, patrol boats, large cutters, buoy tenders, fixed and rotary aircraft, first aid pollution response equipment, Vessel of Opportunity Skimming Systems (VOSS), communications packages both radio and telephonic, and administrative support. DRG can be of assistance during salvage operations.

3.1.2 Marine Safety Offices (MSO)

Each USCG District includes several MSOs that monitor and regulate ship traffic and transfer operations.

Each MSO has limited response capabilities, with a Captain of the Port that is the pre-designated USCG OSC in the coastal zone and would act as the Federal OSC in the in-land zone when requested by EPA. The Captain of the Port can utilize government contractors to respond to releases or discharges.

3.2 NATIONAL STRIKE TEAM

The National Strike Team consists of the three USCG Strike Teams, the Public Information Assist Team (PIAT), and the National Strike Force Coordination Center, and is available to assist OSCs in both preparedness and response.

The Strike Team provides trained personnel and specialized equipment to assist the OSC in training, spill stabilization and containment, and monitoring or directing response actions. The NSFCC can provide coordination support to the OSC and assist in locating spill response resources.

The Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf Strike Team are pollution control teams equipped and trained to assist in the response to oil or chemical incidents. The teams have personnel on standby to respond to incidents occurring throughout the United States. Services available from these teams include:

- technical expertise
- supervisory assistance
- cost documentation
- deployment of salvage and pollution control equipment
- training in pollution response techniques

3.2.1 National Strike Force (NSF)

The NSF can provide the following:

- Spill assessment and response operations strategy
- Supervision and monitoring of operations at the pollution incident site
- Response planning and consultation associated with the pollution response techniques and equipment use

- Site safety oversight
- Provide the following resources:
- Large pump ready load
- Inflatable boom ready load
- VOSS
- Containment booms
- Temporary storage containers
- Product transfer equipment
- Personnel protective equipment
- Communications gear

3.2.2 Public Affairs Assist Team

USCG Public Information Team (PIAT) is available to assist OSCs to meet public information and participation demands.

4.0 MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE ELEMENTS

4.1 NATIONAL RESPONSE CENTER TELECONFERENCE SERVICE

The National Response Center is capable of establishing a teleconference of up to 60 participants. The system is intended for use in support of emergency response operations, but can be made available on a limited basis for routine matters.

Federal OSCs and RRT chairmen may request a teleconference by contacting the NRC Duty Officer. They may request emergency conferences at any time, but should provide one-day advance notice whenever possible.

In addition, FEMA has a dedicated teleconference system capable of handling ten participants.

4.2 NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

The National Response Team is the Nations planning and coordination organization for oil and hazardous substance response. The NRT makes National policy for response and is designated in the NCP as the decision maker on issues affecting two or more EPA or USCG Regions or Areas.

4.3 REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM

4.3.1 Standing RRT

The role of the standing RRT includes communications and procedures planning, coordination, training, evaluation of responses, preparedness, and related activities on a Region- and Area-wide basis. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- a) Providing resources for response to major discharges or releases inside the Region or outside the Region, upon request;
- b) Providing technical assistance for preparedness and conducting and participating as necessary in training and exercises to encourage preparedness activities of the response community within the Region (Region 6 will participate in one exercise per year);
- c) Reviewing and updating the RCP/ACP;
- d) Discussing, modifying, and adopting procedures to enhance the various aspects of response coordination between Local, Tribal, State, Regional, and Federal response efforts;
- e) Reviewing and commenting, where practicable, on Local emergency response plans (required by SARA, Title III). Such reviews are conducted upon the request of a LEPC, forwarded to the RRT by a SERC. The standing RRT may also review and comment on other issues concerning the preparation or implementation of related response plans;
- f) Providing guidance to Area Committees, as appropriate, to ensure inter-area consistency and consistency of individual ACPs with the RCP and NCP;
- g) Reviewing, evaluating, and commenting on Regional and Local responses to discharges or releases, and recommending improvements, as appropriate;

- h) Encouraging the State and Local response community to improve its preparedness for response;
- i) Planning for use of dispersants, surface collection agents, burning agents, biological additives, or other chemical agents, as appropriate; and approving chemicals and techniques for response upon request, following established procedures;
- j) Meeting annually, with rotating meetings among the States, to review response actions, address preparedness and pre-response activities, and consider changes to the RCP;
- k) Providing reports on RRT activities to the NRT twice a year;
- l) Integrating, to the extent possible, ongoing planning and preparedness activities with RRT preparedness initiatives, and all RRT agencies;
- m) Recommending revisions of the NCP to the NRT, based on observations of response operations;
- n) Evaluating the preparedness of the participating agencies and the effectiveness of Federal response to discharges and releases;
- o) Preparing an annual work plan to coordinate emergency response and preparedness activities; and
- p) Coordinating planning and preparedness with RRTs in adjacent Regions.

To carry out the preparedness and planning charge of the RRT, a steering committee, with representatives of Co-Chairs and volunteers of member agencies and States, has been established to identify and facilitate implementation of preparedness and pre-response responsibilities.

Work groups will be established as projects and particular work efforts are identified. The necessity of the work groups shall be re-evaluated annually.

4.3.2 Incident-Specific RRT

Each incident-specific RRT is formed from the standing team when the RRT is activated for a response, and consists of representatives of Local governments, and the appropriate State and Federal agencies, described in Standing RRT, above.

An incident-specific RRT has one Chair, the Regional Co-Chair from the agency providing the Federal OSC/RPM for the response to the incident. The Co-Chairs may designate other U.S. EPA and USCG employees to act as the Co-Chair.

The role of the incident-specific team is determined by the operational requirements of the response to a specific discharge or release. Participation is relative to the technical nature and geographic location of the discharge or release.

The RRT Chair coordinates with the RRT membership and the OSC/RPM for the incident, to determine the appropriate level of RRT member activation. Member agencies and States participating with the RRT must ensure that designated representatives or alternates can function as resource personnel for the OSC/RPM during incident-specific events.

When activated, members of an incident-specific RRT may be requested to:

- a) Provide resources and special or technical expertise
- b) Provide advice, as requested by the OSC/RPM, recommend courses of action for consideration by the OSC/RPM
- c) Advise the OSC/RPM on the duration and extent of Federal response and recommend to the OSC/RPM specific actions to respond to a discharge or release
- d) Request other Federal, State, or Local government or private agencies to provide resources under their existing authorities to respond to a discharge or release or to monitor response operation
- e) Recommend a change of OSC/RPM to the RRT Co-Chairs, if circumstances warrant (e.g., substantial movement of the pollution into the predesignated area of another OSC lead agency)
- f) Ensure continual communication with the National Response Center (NRC) as significant developments occur
- g) Monitor and evaluate reports from the OSC/RPM

Activation of the RRT

An incident-specific RRT may be activated upon request from the OSC, or from any RRT representative, to the Co-Chair of the RRT, when a discharge or release:

- a) Exceeds the response capabilities available to the OSC in the place where it occurs
- b) Transects State, Regional and/or international boundaries
- c) Poses a substantial threat to public health, welfare, or to the environment, or to Regionally significant amounts of property.

Requests for RRT activation shall subsequently be confirmed in writing. Local requests for RRT activation must be made through the State RRT member. The various levels of activation can be found in the NCP. An incident-specific RRT activation may take place by telephone or by assembly.

Levels of activation are listed below. (Note: These levels of activation may take place by telephone or on-site assembly.)

- Alert: Notification of RRT members that an incident has occurred.
- Standby: Notice to some or all RRT members that their services may be needed and that they are to assume a readiness posture and await further instructions. Notice may be given by phone.
- Partial: Notice to selected RRT members that their services are required in response to a pollution incident. The activation notice will specify the services requested and the services that will be required. The initial activation notice may be provided by telephone.
- Full: Notice to all RRT members (with the exception of representatives of non-affected States) that their services are requested in response to a pollution incident. The activation notice will specify the services being requested from each RRT member. The services of some members may be limited to advising the OSC on general matters. The initial activation notice may be provided by telephone.

The RRT can be deactivated by the Chair, when the Chair determines that the OSC no longer requires RRT assistance. The time of deactivation shall be included in a POLREP.

4.4 AREA COMMITTEES

As provided for by the Clean Water Act (CWA) sections 311(a)(18) and (j)(4), Area Committees are the entity appointed by the President consisting of members from qualified personnel of Federal, State, and local agencies with responsibilities that include preparing an area contingency plan for an area designated by the President.

Each Area Committee, under the direction of the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for its area, shall prepare a response plan for that area according to the requirements specified in CWA 311(j)(4)(C).

Accordingly, NCP 300.Subpart E defines the area committees main three responsibilities as, (1) preparing and ACP for their areas; (2) working with appropriate Federal, State, and local officials to enhance the contingency planning of those officials and to assure pre-planning of joint response efforts, including appropriate procedures for mechanical recovery, dispersal, shoreline cleanup, protection of sensitive environmental areas, and protection, rescue, and rehabilitation of fisheries and wildlife; and (3) working with appropriate Federal, State and local officials to expedite decisions for the use of dispersants and other mitigating substances and devices.

4.5 SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT COORDINATORS

NOAA Scientific Support Coordinators (SSCs) are available, at the request of the OSC, to assist with actual or potential responses to discharges of oil or releases of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants.

Generally, SSCs are provided by the NOAA in coastal and marine areas. Typically, ERT acts as the USEPA SSC during inland events, however NOAA SSCs can provide expertise in chemistry, plume trajectory modeling, natural resources at risk and data management.

4.6 OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES WITH OSC RESPONSIBILITY

4.6.1 Department of Defense

DOD, consistent with its operational requirements, may provide assistance in critical oil and hazardous materials incidents, in the maintenance of navigation channels, and in removal and salvage of navigation obstructions. The DOD will provide the OSC and RRT Chair for releases occurring on DOD property or facilities.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) - has specialized equipment and personnel for maintaining navigation channels, for removing navigational obstructions, for accomplishing structural repairs, and for performing maintenance to hydro power electric generating equipment. COE can also provide design

services, perform construction, and provide contract writing and contract administration services for other Federal agencies.

U.S. Navy Supervisor of Salvage (SUPSALV) - is knowledgeable and experienced in ship salvage, shipboard damage control, and diving, and has equipment for salvage-related and open-sea pollution incidents.

4.6.2 Department of Energy

DOE provides the designated OSC/RPM for responses to releases on or from any facility or vessel under its jurisdiction. DOE also provides radiological emergency planning expertise to the RRT and radiological advice and/or response resources to assist the OSCs in the mitigation of events involving radioactive materials.

Under the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP), DOE also has the initial responsibility for coordinating offsite Federal radiological monitoring and assessment assistance during the response to radiological emergencies.